

Washington, DC - Working to improve air quality and commuting in local communities, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39) announced that she has secured \$850,000 to purchase new clean-air buses for the city's popular Cerritos On Wheels (COW) bus system. Sánchez got the project included in the Fiscal Year 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill (H.R. 4818) which passed the U.S. House of Representatives on November 20th, by a vote of 344-51. This money is in addition to the \$300,000 that Sánchez obtained for the program in Fiscal Year 2004 bringing the grand total to \$1,150,000.

"In Southern California, commuting and air pollution affect the daily lives of all residents. This huge amount of money will enable Cerritos to begin converting its diesel city buses to newer, larger clean-burning buses. This is a positive step towards improving local air quality, while at the same time making commuting for residents more comfortable," said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez.

Presently, Cerritos leases older, diesel buses for the COW system. Sánchez secured \$300,000 in federal bus funds in 2004 to enable Cerritos to begin ordering new, larger buses that use clean-burning propane instead of diesel. The first new buses will arrive in January 2005. Cerritos plans to replace its current COW diesel fleet with seven new and larger clean-air buses, each costing about \$260,000.

"Especially for residents without access to vehicles, our local bus system provides a vital link to businesses and community services throughout the region. These funds will be of great benefit to the regional transportation network and especially to the hard working people of California's 39th District who use this bus system on a daily basis," said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez.

The new buses will hold 30 people; compared to 18 with the existing diesel buses. The COW system is very popular with students, seniors, and commuters. With this new installment of federal funds secured by Sánchez, Cerritos will be able to reduce the amount of city funds needed for its new fleet. The COW system currently boards 250,000 people annually and has stops not only in Cerritos but also in Artesia, Bellflower, Lakewood, La Palma, and Norwalk. In addition, COW links to regional bus lines, including the MTA, Long Beach, Norwalk and Orange County bus services.